

October 18, 1962

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION ON OCTOBER 18, AT LUNCHEON  
AT DCI's RESIDENCE.

25X1

25X1 Attending were: Mr. McCone, [redacted]  
[redacted], Mr. Ray Cline, Mr. George McManus, and Mr.  
Elder.

25X1 After a general conversation about topics including the Intel-  
ligence Methods Conference, the specific question was posed as to  
what was going on in connection with the Soviet build-up in Cuba. The  
[redacted] examined closely the question of whether the Soviets were  
complying with Castro's request, or whether the Soviets were acting  
in their own interest. The consensus was that this was a deliberate  
Soviet policy decision taken earlier this year, and that the military  
25X1 build-up, insofar as [redacted] information was concerned,  
was of a nature to advance Soviet political objectives, which were not  
very carefully defined.

25X1 The question was put to [redacted] on a purely hypothetical  
basis as to whether the build-up of defensive weapons was not but a  
prelude to the secret introduction of some kind of an offensive capability.  
25X1 This hypothesis was hard for [redacted] to accept and they explored  
several alternatives, including the positioning of Soviet intelligence  
collection equipment.

After extended discussions the question was transformed  
into the hypothetical issue of what action the United States might be  
forced to take should the Soviets install an offensive capability in  
Cuba. The answer by [redacted] was  
25X1 direct and explicit. They said that as far as America's allies were  
concerned, if the United States could produce hard provable evidence  
of a Soviet offensive capability in Cuba directed against American  
targets, then the reaction of our allies to U.S. action would be very  
different.

25X1 My own impression of the discussion was that [redacted]  
had not seriously considered the possibility and the implications of a  
Soviet offensive capability in Cuba but were now prepared to consider  
this possibility. Moreover, the revelation to them of hard evidence  
would have a tremendous impact on their current thinking.

Walter Elder

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